

Eucharist Parent/Adult Catechesis 4:2

The Liturgy of the Word

We Listen

Read the following selections from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

A sacramental celebration is a meeting of God's children with their Father, in Christ and the Holy Spirit; this meeting takes the form of a dialogue, through actions and words. Admittedly, the symbolic actions are already a language, but the Word of God and the response of faith have to accompany and give life to them, so that the seed of the Kingdom can bear its fruit in good soil. The liturgical actions signify what the Word of God expresses: both his free initiative and his people's response of faith. (CCC, 1153)

The *Liturgy of the Word* is an integral part of sacramental celebrations. To nourish the faith of believers, the signs which accompany the Word of God should be emphasized: the book of the Word (a lectionary or a book of the Gospels), its veneration (procession, incense, candles), the place of its proclamation (lectern or ambo), its audible and intelligible reading, the minister's homily which extends its proclamation, and the responses of the assembly (acclamations, meditation psalms, litanies, and profession of faith). (CCC, 1154)

Reflect on the following points drawn from the reading:

- We are reminded that Jesus is the true Word of God, and that every sacramental experience is an encounter with him and through him with God the Father. We enter into a dialogue, a two-way conversation. Our part of the conversation is largely internal, but it also takes place in our ritual actions.
- Listening to a sacred story, taking it into our hearts, and allowing it to direct our lives is an act of faith and intimacy with the storyteller. In the Liturgy of the Word, we do this in preparation for the reception of Christ in Communion, another completely complementary act of faith and intimacy.
- The items of our worship, named in the second selection from the Catechism above, are important. They remind us that we are doing something special at a time, and in a place, set apart from the routine of our lives. They remind us that sacramental experiences are, in a sense, timeless.